NAQCC News

SEP 26, 2009	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #103

In this issue:

1. October Challenge.
2. September Sprint Results
3. General Club News
4. Elmer Project
5. Latest Award Winners
6. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. OCTOBER CHALLENGE: This challenge deals with working our 5th Anniversary special event stations N1A, N2A,.....N0A. Make as many DIFFERENT band-call QSO's as possible. For example N1A on 80, N5A on 20, N8A on 80, N1A on 40, N5A on 20 count as 4 QSO's. The duplicate N5A on 20 does not count towards mastering the challenge.

As you should do for every challenge, sprint, and award, read and understand the rules completely before you do anything. Here in the newsletters we just give a brief synopsis of what's going on.

Full Challenge info here.

2. SEPTEMBER SPRINT RESULTS: Participation was up from the slight dip last month. Conditions were good with 40 and 80 complementing each other nicely, at least here in the NE USA. 40 was in long skip giving out the more distant mults, while 80 gave out the short distance ones. A great many stations had 15 or more mults with a couple going over 20. I (K3WWP) was right at 20 for the first time in a while. I thought we'd get more entrants who built and used a homebrew straight key to compete for our special award certificate, but I really enjoyed seeing the pictures of the ones that were built. We have some talented and imaginative members in the NAQCC. The winner of the certificate drawing was W5YDB who made his key out of a steak knife. I guess if the going gets slow you can always cut a chunk of steak to chew on.

Again just about everyone used the autologger this month, and of those, a good many used the GenLog program for their logging. Remember if you do use GenLog to submit the correct file as your log. That the one you get from opening the "Log" menu and selcting the "Write ASCII.log (xxxxx.log)" choice where xxxxx is your call letters. Then copy and paste the contents of the xxxxx.log file into the autologger.

Here now are the full statistics for the September sprint.

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

	Sep	Aug	Rec	Month
Logs -	51	49	65	5/09 & 4/09
Autologger logs -	49	48	59	5/09
Stns in logs -	93	90	110	5/08
Hour 1 QSO's -	465	328	564	9/08
Hour 2 QSO's -	332	249	476	9/08
Total QSO's -	797	577	1040	9/08
20M QSO's -	19	80	209	6/09
40M QSO's -	506	458	720	5/09
80M QSO's -	272	39	481	12/07

WINNERS:

1st SWA East - K3WWP
1st SWA Central - W5TM
1st SWA Mountain - WU7F
1st SWA Pacific - n/a
1st Gain - n/a

* - Special Award (Using a homebrew straight key) participants
Drawing Entrants: K3WWP, W5YDM
Drawing Winner: W5YDM
Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because that shows the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are important also.

We had another very high total of 11 stations who didn't submit a log show up 5-15 times in the 51 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 11 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
AA2YV, KA2CAQ, KC0IEM, KE9DR, N5RDN, NS2X, VE3HNE

Full sprint info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- We are changing the way we archive our past newsletters to save space on the Usatek server where the NAQCC web site is hosted. From now on, past newletters can be accessed in .pdf format from K3WWP's SkyDrive 25GB web site. See the Newsletter Past Issues page for more info.

- Let's take a look at our Participation award as we do periodically here in the newsletter.

Through the just completed September Sprint, a maximum of 25 points have been available with a maximum of 11 more to be assigned this year. Here is a list of those still eligible to win a certificate and/or our grand prize of a free one year membership in FISTS.

Call	Points	Elimination-Number	
		Cert	FISTS
Eastern:			
K3WWP	25	-	-
N8XMS	25	-	-
W2JEK	25	-	-
KB3AAG	18	5	5
KQ1P	15	2	2
Western:			
WY7N	15	-	2
NU7T	7	4	E
KD0V	6	3	E
KD5MMM	6	3	E
WD0K	6	3	E
K6CSL	5	2	E
W5AG	5	2	E
K5GQ	4	1	E
NO2D	4	1	E
Canada/DX:			
VE3HUR	14	-	E
VE3FUJ	5	3	E
VA2SG	4	2	E

Where a hyphen means the current leader(s), and E means eliminated from winning the FISTS certificate. A number in the last two columns means how many points the current leader must get to eliminate him, or how many points he doesn't get to eliminate himself, or a combination of both. Think of it just like the magic number in baseball.

- My how time flies! Only a very few weeks now till our fifth anniversary celebration. All our operators are ready and set to go. That is all but a couple who had to back out because of hc009 business or health reasons. We could use at least one more operator in each of the following call areas: W6, W7, W8. Each of those areas has only one operator signed up currently. You can still volunteer from the other seven call areas also. Just email us at **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and express your interest and we'll send you an info packet on the operation. For more information check the N3A Operation page in the Home section of the web site regularly from now through the end of the operation on October 18. There you'll find a schedule of just when our 10 special event calls will be on the air and who will be operating them. Also certificate, QSL, and other info will be posted as the time draws closer.

- Be sure not to forget the beautiful hand-crafted CW lamp we are giving away in conjunction with our anniversary operation. See the second item on the prizes page in the Home section of the web site for a picture of the lamp and details how you can be the lucky winner.

- While you're looking at the Prizes page, check out the other prizes as well. The NAQCC appreciates the loyalty of our members, and we believe in rewarding that loyalty with some small gifts from time to time.

- Also check out the Certificate, Links, Logos, Plaques, and QSL's pages in the Home section of the web site to see how you can download and/or purchase different NAQCC related items that you will be proud to use and show off your club membership.

- We're continuing with the hidden call sign idea suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member. Not to be confused with the many other call signs in the newsletter, this one will be in a place that is definitely out of context and will contain a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email us BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (October 10) and win 100 NAQCC QSL cards donated by the NAQCC. If it is NOT your call sign, and you find it, all you get is the personal satisfaction of finding it, nothing else. A call sign is only used once whether the ham finds it or not. So far we have had one winner - KD1R. The latest potential winner W2CRW missed out. Good luck. Oh, and no use using your browser's search feature to find it. That won't work.

4. ELMER PROJECT: Net report from N3IJR: None received this month.

The NAQCC QRS Net meets each Sunday evening on 7122.5 kHz at 8:30 PM EDT (Mondays at 0030Z). NCS is Karl N3IJR, our Elmer Project co-director. Alternate NCS is our President Tom WY3H. Karl will be sending a net report for each end-of-month newsletter listing check-ins for the month as well as other comments on the net.

Remember also that Karl has a list of Elmer's who are willing to help on an individual basis, all you have to do is drop Karl an e-mail and he would be glad to hook you up with an Elmer.

We need more help with the Elmer project on both ends. Those who can help others and those who need help. If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)

Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

5. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

CERTIFICATES:
1000 MPW:
#0059 - NB4M
#0060-#0065 - W6AZ

30-30 Magnum:
#0005 - NU7T

Alphabet Prefix:
USA: #0009 - W6AZ
#0010 - VE3HUR

WAS:

#0010 - W6AZ
#0011 - VE3HUR

Worked Members:
Basic:
#0001 - K3WWP

ENDORSEMENTS and/or WEB SITE LISTINGS:
KMPW 100 Honor Roll:
K3WWP - 395 - SWA
W6AZ - 201 - SWA

Alphabet Prefix Honor Roll:
W6AZ - 202 - World
W6AZ - 100 - USA
NU7T - 117 - USA
VE3HUR - 101 - USA

Suffix Words Honor Roll:
NU7T - 100 - SWA/GAIN

Worked Members:
Basic:
K3WWP - 500

Remember our incentive to work towards and earn our NAQCC awards thanks to Gregg WB8LZG. Gregg has donated a set of beautiful knob inserts for the K1 and K2 rigs. The Prizes page in the main section of the web site has more info and a picture. You can win one by earning and applying for any TWO of the following NAQCC awards. It's first come, first served, so make haste.

QSO-A-DAY
30-30
Alphabet Prefix
Worked Members - Advanced
Suffix Words

Check the 'Current' page in the 'Awards' section of the web site for rules for these awards.

Only new applicants on or after October 1, 2008 are eligible.

Full List of all award winners here.

6. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Oct 8. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them,

and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From Tom VE3UKU #1212 -** I really enjoy visiting the NAQCC website and reading the newsletters. What excites me is hearing about a couple of hams who go out and throw up a wire or two for antennas and operate in a park, just for the fun of it. We have a couple of weeks of nice weather left and maybe I can inspire a couple of ham friends in our club, (www.ve3sar.org) to do such a event. During field day this year, I was chosen as head chief for the weekend,(maybe because I served in the US Navy for 8 years). On Sunday morning after everyone was fed (scrambled eggs, sausages, toast, juice and coffee), I wandered down to our CW station, sat down and adjusted the keyer, and sent a few calls out. Bingo, I quickly had three QSOs on 80 meters, and five on 40 meters and just had fun!

The other night I went up to the shack around 7:30 pm, got on 40 meters, sent out my callsign and bingo, KB1BIC from MA came back and we had a great QSO for 20 minutes. My keyer is a vibroplexer and I have been toying with the idea of buying another one called an iambic keyer, black base.

Visit our club's website www.ve3sar.org and you can find a picture of me with my hat at our FD site, sitting on a picnic table at the start of field day.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** Gee, I wonder if Tom above was referring to me and Don and our portable operation featured in the Member News last issue? HI.

As you know, for me ham radio is CW. The two are one and the same. I don't use phone or any of these new-fangled digital modes where ham's computers talk to each other. It often doesn't even feel like real CW to me using a keyer, although it is very convenient and efficient and it sends near perfect code based on the ability of the operator to use it correctly. Still it feels more like CW to me when I use a straight key whether it be a J-38 or the homebrew keys I've made for myself to use in our NAQCC homebrew SK sprints.

There is still another keying device that is somewhere between a SK and a keyer. Obviously I'm referring to a bug. I used one briefly way back in the 1960's before switching over to a succession of keyers that I've used since then - ARRL Handbook, W9TO, WB4VVF AccuKeyer, CMOS Super Keyer II. Recently I've gone back to using a bug. First trying the one donated by an anonymous donor to be given away by the NAQCC as described on the Prizes page in the main section of the web site. After writing about that in my diary on my own web site, my good friend Larry W2LJ gave me a bug for my own use. It's a Vibroplex Lightning Bug (ca. 1969). I really never thought I could master a bug again after all the years on a keyer, but I must say I'm not doing too badly after a couple weeks of using it now. I really feel comfortable using it, and this evening in a QSO I found it becoming second nature to me as I could look up something in the FISTS Keynote while I was sending with it. It also has more of a 'real CW' feel to it, just like my straight keys.

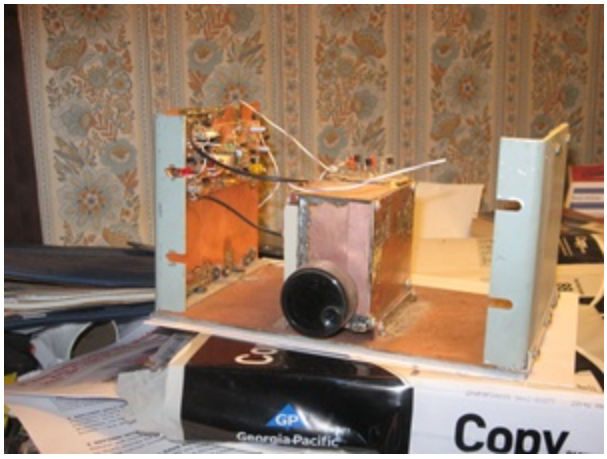
And I received another gift for my shack. Once I get that working, I'll have an 'all gift' shack - well, except for my antennas and antenna tuner, I guess. Don WA3ZBJ knowing how much I enjoyed our portable operation, gave me a TenTec 1340 so I could have some kind of portable rig of my own. He said it needs some work, and he had kind of given up on it, but figured I could get it going pretty easily. I'm sure going to try, and I'll report on my progress in my diary and here in the member news.

- **From Ed N8WXL #2537 -** I am 71 this year and am home brewing my way back into ham radio. It is a lot of fun and since I am on a fixed retirement going the wrong way, the price is right. I am building my version of K8IQY's 2N40 40-meter rig but I'm using a Clapp oscillator. This is a work in progress. Jim's rig is much smaller than mine as I am building "large". I want

play room in order to try stuff out when I see ideas that may work. I am now at the point where I need to build the crystal filter. I found in an old handbook a system for sweeping a crystal filter and I want to build that so I can play with the filter. I guess I am more of a builder than an operator. Most of my test gear is home brewed so the crystal sweep system will be right at home in my shack. I hope to be on the air this autumn but I have to first finish up some weather proofing work on the house and garage before the winter weather hits.

I was wondering if anyone has a good design for a 30-meter homebrew QRP transceiver for 30 meters? I am looking at a 30 meter popcorn DC receiver. I'd like to get on the band and help increase activity there.

I have completed a balanced antenna tuner and have a 80 meter loop up. I tested the system with the help of a friend's mobile rig and we got good reports out of Michigan while running 25 watts. We got a 1:1 SWR with ease so the tuner works great.



- **From Adam KC7DVF #2478 -** On August 29th, 2009, The Amateur Radio Portable Operations Group (ARPOG) celebrated its one year anniversary. ARPOG is a group of hams that set up radio demonstrations in the city parks for the purpose of promoting Amateur Radio. We are based here in the Tucson (AZ) area, but we have members across North America, Australia, and New Zealand. We celebrated this momentous occasion by setting up a station at Reid Park here in Tucson. At the station, we had two Yaesu FT-817's, one on HF, and one on VHF. The VHF station made contact with the Arizona Science Center up in Phoenix and we talked to several of the kids that were visiting the Museum station. One of the kids mentioned that he "Liked the Morse Code the best" (I guess the operator at the station was showing them what CW sounded like). For more info on ARPOG, and what we are up to, visit our site at: groups.yahoo.com/group/ARPortable/.

- **From John KM6NN #2879 -** With a new call in hand and a need for RFI in our blood, we were off and running for another great adventure onto the airways. Lewis, KF4WK (NAQCC #0700); Doc, NV4T (NAQCC #3805); John, KM6NN; and our newest member Richard, KJ4MXI (yet to join NAQCC) worked our way to a dead end road in Clarksville Tennessee. The road ends at a grove of trees and this was a perfect location for setting up our station. While I broke out the table and chairs, Lewis and Doc got out the K3 and key. With the table and radio set up, all that they were waiting on was for me to put up the antenna.

With my trusty weight in hand, I found the right tree and after several attempts, I was able to put one leg of the dipole right where I wanted it. Now I had to set up the other end. While looking around, I found a light pole at the edge of a parking lot near where our station. Lewis gave me that look of "OK, what are you going to do now". One of the lights on the pole appeared to be broken and I sure did not want to be the one to break the other one. But not to let a small thing like a light stand in the way of QRP, I set up on the windward side of the pole.

Without much trouble and after a couple of tries, I was over the top and pulling the antenna tight. Doc and Lewis were sitting at the table waiting for the antenna and both had an anxious look on their faces.

With coax in hand, Lewis hooked up to the K3 and sounds of joy sprang forth calling CQ CQ. With Doc at the key, Lewis hit the auto tune button and got the good old 1.1 to 1 SWR. Before I could get back to the car to get the paperwork for getting all this down on paper, Doc was in QSO with the first call that came over the radio. John, N0EVH (NAQCC #0067) from Independence MO had been calling CQ when the radio came on and Doc made a quick call and bingo, John came right back.

With our new call of WA4PIG, Doc had once again made the first contact. This just reinforced his standing as Boss Hog of our Flying Pigs chapter. John gave us a 559 report and his report was a strong 589. He was on the radio looking for some Polar Bears but could not pass up a good QSO. John also commented on our cool call. About the same time I got situated to operate, Richard, KJ4MXI showed up to join in the fun.

With the first call in the log I went to work. I moved around 40 meters like I knew what I was doing. First I heard W9JVC, Ernest in La Salle IL. He had a good signal but when I tried to call him I got no answer. On down the band I went with high hopes and my effort paid off when I called K3KYR, Jeff. Jeff is located in Bombay, NY. He gave me a 329 with lots of QSB. His signal was a strong 559 and after a few tries he got our info and that we were working QRP with 5 watts. He was QRO with 200 watts. I love QRP radio. I then took a short break while Lewis gave Richard a tour of the K3. Richard is just learning CW and is looking for a good all around radio. The K3 is one of the best I have seen and Lewis takes every chance he gets to show it off.

After the short tour of the rig, I was back on looking for more. I heard KK0I, Jack (NAQCC #2219), working portable but he could not hear me. Then KC4VLM, Walter, came on and was calling CQ. I gave him a call but got no come back. Things were looking a bit grim for me but I kept on giving it all I could. I heard VE3XND calling but he was so weak that I knew we would not be able to work each other.

Then along cam AA3EJ, Dave (NAQCC #0704), in Philipsburg PA with a good signal. He was a 559 and he gave me a 449 with lots of QSB. I was excited and could just contain myself enough to give my information. His last report to my call was that he was having trouble with my signal and I might want to QRO. Just my luck. But Dave was good copy on my end and I appreciated the call.

The day was getting cooler because of the overcast conditions and when the wind started moving my paperwork around, I knew we were getting close to closing up shop. At about the same time the band started to fade so with that our outing coming to a close. I reluctantly gave up and shut down the station. Not bad for the short time we were on the air. Three contacts and tons of fun.

- **From Bill K6ACJ #2911 -** I have had very good success with a SoftRock RXTX Version 6.3 running one and 15 watts output on 40, 30 and 20 meters. I have used both ROCKY SDR software and PowerSDR-SR40, but I prefer the simple ROCKY as it has been very effective and fast on both CW and PSK31. PSK31 operation is really basic so some might find one of the versions of PowerSDR plus VAC software linked to DM780 far more comprehensive for the digital modes. Which ever SDR software is implemented, the SDR panadapter display is really great for finding signals on a quiet band, with more QSOs the result.

The kit can be built as a simple one board kit with one output amplifier module and one watt output or a complex project with transmit PA modules from 160 meters to 10 meters, separate HFProjects PA-100 amp, Digital freq display and on board sound card. SDR requires at least a good sound card and my Creative Labs USB Audigy II box is mounted as part of the 9" x 10.5" chassis. A second USB connection for LO frequency control through a onboard I2C interface is a step up.

The basic single board is well stuffed with small components, a few SMT capacitors and a few not too hard to solder SMT chips but it is otherwise easy to construct. Some of the one watt PA tri-filar cores can be difficult but a few tricks like using colored enameled wire certainly helps remove confusion for the windings.

For full details and lots of help, join the two Yahoo lists at groups.yahoo.com/group/softrock40/ or www.biztek.com/k6acj/softrock.

Just as a note, my other excellent QRP rigs include a Elecraft KX-1, Yaesu FT817, SWL-30 and two SWL SSB Transceivers. All QRP accessories are home brew.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.